

There are at present seventeen male lunatics in the Asylum, and during the period above named seven have been admitted, and seven discharged cured. The majority of the patients are suffering from the form of insanity known as *dementia*, which, I believe, is chiefly to be attributed to long continued habits of intemperance, combined with the privations and hardships incidental to gold-mining pursuits, especially in this part of New Zealand; the large majority of the patients have been engaged in mining, and several had previously been inmates of lunatic asylums in this and the Australian Colonies.

During the past half-year very few cases of sickness have occurred, and at the present time there is not a patient confined to his bed, with the exception of one who is suffering from incipient paralysis of the lower limbs; every care and attention is paid to him that his case demands.

Amongst the improvements recently made is a sick ward, provided with necessary furniture. A spacious bathroom has also been erected, with convenience for cold and warm bathing and shower baths. The patients are required to use the bath at least once a week.

Mr. Cleary, who is appointed keeper of the Asylum, is unremitting in his attention; and Mr. Birt, who has the care and control of the patients, I feel called upon to state, performs his duty with assiduous care and kindness.

The sanitary arrangements are excellent: the food, although plain, is wholesome and good, enabling me to maintain the physical condition of the patients in a satisfactory state; but as the provision for accommodation of lunatics is at present imperfect, I most earnestly hope that the County Council will, during its present sitting, adopt measures to provide for the amelioration of their mental condition, by placing on the estimates a sum for the provision of necessary medical comforts, and for the carrying out of those alterations in the building and grounds which are essential for the proper treatment of the insane. It seems but reasonable to suppose that the same sum per head, or something approaching it, should be granted for the lunatics in this Asylum as is allowed for those in the Asylum on the Hospital Reserve. The present limited resources debar me from providing many small but necessary requirements which would materially benefit the patients.

I also very earnestly desire to draw your attention to the fact that no provision is made in the contemplated estimates for providing clothing for the lunatics, and would suggest that a uniform style of dress should be adopted, as in the Hospital. I am unable to give a tabular statement of the lunatics, &c., &c., who are detained here, until provided with the necessary books, which I have applied for.

I have, &c.,

FITZHERBERT DERMOTT,
Medical Officer, Lunatic Asylum.

C. Hoos, Esq., County Chairman.

No. 9.

His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Otago, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Province of Otago, New Zealand,

Superintendent's Office, Dunedin 21st May, 1870.

SIR,—

In compliance with the request contained in your circular No. 70-525, of the 2nd March last, I have the honor to forward the Report of the Inspector of the Dunedin Lunatic Asylum for the past year.

I have, &c.,

J. MACANDREW,

Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 9.

Mr. CHETHAM-STRODE to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Otago.

Dunedin, 12th May, 1870.

SIR,—

I have the honor to submit to you a report on the general condition and progress of the above institution for the past year.

On the 31st March, 1869, the number of patients in the Asylum was ninety-nine, of whom seventy-two were males, and twenty-seven females.

During the past year eighty-one patients have been admitted, viz. sixty-three males and eighteen females; while the total number under treatment during the twelve months has been 180, making a daily average of 105.

The number discharged during the year was sixty-two, of whom sixty-one recovered, and one was relieved. The deaths were six, viz. five males and one female, making a total of sixty-eight discharged and died within the year.

Of the six patients who died during the year, two were from epilepsy, one from apoplexy, one from paralysis, one from perforation of the stomach, and one from natural decay. Post-mortem examinations were made in three of these cases, and a Coroner's inquest was held in each.

On the 31st March, 1870, the total number of patients in the Asylum was 112, consisting of seventy-nine males and thirty-three females.

A tabular statement is appended, showing the general results of each year, since the opening of this Asylum in the month of August, 1863.

In terms of section 50 of "The Lunatics Act, 1863," it was deemed necessary to make inquiries relative to a lunatic patient, said to be kept by his friends in the Clutha District. A medical practitioner was therefore sent to report, who, after due inquiry, expressed his opinion, that as the patient, who was imbecile and harmless and did not require to be under restraint, was kept clean and comfortable by his friends, it would not improve his state to send him to the Asylum.